



# **News from Congressman Tom Lantos**

**12<sup>th</sup> Congressional District of California  
San Mateo/San Francisco**

---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 30, 2003**

**FOR INFORMATION CALL:  
Bob King - (202) 225-6735**

---

## **LANTOS AND FRANK DENOUNCE ADMINISTRATION'S OPPOSITION TO UN RESOLUTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

Washington, D.C. - Today, Rep. Tom Lantos (D-San Mateo/San Francisco) and Barney Frank (D-Mass.) expressed disappointment over the Administration's refusal to endorse a resolution at the UN Commission for Human Rights that expressed "deep concern at the occurrence of violations of human rights in the world against persons on the grounds of their sexual orientation," and called upon "all States to promote and protect the human rights of all persons regardless of their sexual orientation."

The landmark resolution, presented by Brazil and cosponsored by Canada and 18 European countries, was actively opposed by a group of Islamic countries that claimed the resolution went counter to their religion and laws.

A State Department spokesman said last week that the United States would also not endorse the resolution because it is difficult for the U.S. to commit to "something that requires some sort of universal application throughout the system, unless it covers basic principles that we do in the federal system."

The Administration did not explain how the resolution's non-discrimination principle is not considered a basic principle in America.

"I am outraged at the Administration's failure to seize this critical opportunity to confront the failure of many governments to fight discrimination and violence against people based on their sexual orientation," said Tom Lantos, the top Democrat on the International Relations Committee. "It is truly shocking that the United States would join forces with countries like Libya, Algeria and Saudi Arabia in opposition to a resolution calling on all nations to respect the human rights of gays and lesbians. Our government's action is providing aid and comfort to regimes that sanction and even participate in the brutal and dehumanizing treatment of gays and lesbians."

"President Bush has asserted in the past that he believes all people should be treated fairly without regard to their sexual orientation," added Frank, "so I'm puzzled why his Administration would oppose a resolution that advances that very principle. The Administration's inaction sadly speaks much more loudly than the president's words."

After lengthy debate, the 53-member commission voted 24-17, with 10 abstentions, to postpone the issue until next year's annual session. The United States abstained from the vote.